

----- ST REPORT ONLINE MAGAZINE -----
"The Original 16/32bit Online Magazine"

from
STR Publishing Inc.
"

May 25, 1990

No.6.21

STReport Online Magazineâ €
Post Office Box 6672
Jacksonville, Florida
32205 ~ 6672

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- The Editor's Podium - CPU REPORT - CPU STATUS REPORT
- BORLAND SHIPS COMPILER - Lynx Power Mod. - PITTSBURGH SPEAKS
- MEMORY CARDS ALTERED - MIDI-Tasking - STR CONFIDENTIAL

-----*** TT TO MAKE CANADIAN DEBUT! ***-----
---** PORTFOLIO OS AT RISK??? **---
-----** CIS' RON LUKS INTERVIEWED **-----

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> The Editor's Podiumâ €

This weekend heralds the beginning of summer 1990, Memorial Day Weekend the time for the "Indy 500" and many other enjoyable annual celebrations. For example, the official opening of the beaches in the northern climes and of course, the seasonal openings of the many amusement parks around this great nation. What does all this have to do with computers? Not a doggone thing except that if this issue were to depend on bringing the readers positive, solid information about the world of Atari, we would have to forfeit this week's issue, well.... almost.

Atari & Russia, how very reassuring! What a marvelous idea! Without a doubt, a marketing stroke of genius! Surely, these comments echoed through the hallowed executive halls and washrooms out at 'you know where'. After all, who better to congratulate them than themselves? The 'other side of the coin' is also looming large on the horizon, according to Atari's Pratt, they're going to play "Let's make a deal" with the Russians involving computers for DRAM chips. But think about this folks, when will the USA see any real market penetration by Atari? Are the loyal US users about to take a deeper back seat? For Atari to get the Russian DRAM, they must ship computers to Russia.

Between the existing European, Canadian and other world markets, where will all this leave the USA? Will the accommodating and apologetic statements sound like.. "While Atari sincerely wishes to ship all of its product to the US Computer Market now, it has to live up to its agreements in Eastern Europe." Or, "Atari now boasts of being the leading computer in use in Eastern Europe while the US userbase has remained at a loyal 500,000 for the past four years. And, "The vast flow of new software originating from the Eastern European Market has bolstered the Atari Computer markets in its other market areas." When.. when is the * USA * going to get the real flow of product? At the rate we are going, that will remain the \$64,000 question. Strange, but in looking back at past issues of STReport, the very same question was being asked every year for the last two years.....

In light of the successes of all the letter writing campaigns and of course, the "Revolution" (tongue in cheek), USA's Atarians can now bask in the sweet light of knowing they will be seeing all the products on the dealers shelves. POP! And then the lights really went on. Those who really must feel let down are the many loyal users who sent Atari the many letters of endorsement and support over the past two years where they have found that the critiques in the onlines etc., were in their opinions, far too critical of Atari and its adept marketing and sales procedures in the USA. Like the man says... "You ain't seen nuthin yet!" Wait 'till they get cookin' with the Eastern Europeans. While STReport welcomes the opportunity to congratulate Atari for its apparent success with the Russians, we in all fairness to the USA's users, fervently entreat the powers that be at Atari to NOT make the US Atari Computer marketplace wednesday's child for another year. Simply put, the US Atari computer market shows every sign of not surviving if it is handled in the same lackadaisical manner it has been for the last two years.

Whichever way it goes, we, the diehards, will be here waiting while we continue clearing the cobwebs from our shelves where we made room for the new goodies....

Ralph.....

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Forum Manager/SYSOP and contract holder for all of the Atari Forums on
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Mike Schoenbach	[76703,4363]**	Dave Groves	[76703,4223]**
Charles McGuinness	[76701,11]**	David Ramsden	[76703,4224]**
Dan Rhea	[76703,4364]**	Bill Aycock	[76703,4061]**
Dick Brudzynski	[76703,2011]	Don LeBow	[76704,41]
Keith Joins	[76702,375]		

All the assistant Sysops marked with an "***" in the above list are
responsible for overseeing all the areas of the Atari ST Arts and
Entertainment Forum, including the message board, the libraries, the
announcements, and the conference area.

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

> CPU REPORTâ €
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by Michael Arthur

Remember When....

In May 1973, the first non-kit microprocessor-based computer (called the Micral) was introduced, and how the term, "microcomputer" was first used to describe it?

Or how, in January 1975, an article in Popular Electronics described the first "personal computer", the MITS Altair 8800, which (along with the Micral) was based on the Intel 8800 chip?

CPU Systems Roundupâ € XXVIII

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THE AMIGA 3000, 68030 TT, AND TALES OF WORKSTATION LORE

When the first round of Unix-capable 80386 PCs first reached the market, much interest was turned towards how a reasonably powerful Unix-compatible low-end workstation would do in the growing 'Personal Workstation' segment of the computer industry. Commodore has reopened this debate by introducing the Amiga 3000, a \$4000.00 68030 Unix workstation which appears to be poised at taking a significant share of both the Multimedia Market, and some of the low/middle end of the Unix Computer industry. Since this is the same niche that the 68030 TT was intended for, let us both take a look at the Amiga 3000, and compare it to the 68030 TT, in order to gain a more objective perspective of this growing situation:

The Amiga 3000 is based on the Motorola 68030 chip, and uses either a 16 MHZ 68881, or a 25 MHZ 68882 Floating Point Math Chip. It comes with 1 Meg of Chip RAM onboard (expandable to 2 Megs onboard), and 1 Meg of Fast RAM onboard (expandable to 4 Megs Onboard). It also comes with a 23-pin Amiga video port, a 15-pin VGA Multisync Monitor port, a DMA-based SCSI Port, an RS-232 port, and a Parallel port. The Amiga 3000 supports a total of 3 internal 3.5" disk drives, and has an internal 40 Meg Hard Drive as standard.

The Amiga 3000 uses the 32-bit Zorro III Expansion Bus Architecture, which is downward compatible with Zorro II (Amiga 2000) Boards. In order to do this, it multiplexes the address and data lines of Zorro III-based cards. The A3000 (or Amiga 3000) has 4 Zorro III Expansion Slots onboard, as well as 1 100-pin Video Slot (for attaching Genlocks or Video Cards), and 2 100-pin AT Expansion Slots, for use with Commodore's Bridgeboard PC Emulation boards. It also features a 200-pin CPU Expansion Slot, with processor takeover capability, and support for a CPU Cache Board. With this Slot, the Amiga 3000 can easily support CPU Accelerator Cards....

The Amiga 3000 motherboard uses over 9 Custom Chips as Coprocessors.

Three chips, codenamed "Fat Agnes", "Daphne", and "Super Denise", are a set of Graphics/Sound Coprocessors known the Amiga Enhanced Chip Set. In the Amiga 3000 version of the ECS, hardware support for 60 Hz (PAL) video on European machines is included. Here is a list of some of the graphics modes supported by Amiga 3000's Enhanced Chip Set (or ECS):

- 320x200 with 4096 Colors displayable at the same time.
- 640x256 with 64 displayable colors out of a 4096 color palette.
- 640x480, with 4 displayable colors out of a 64 color palette.
- 640x960, with 4 colors out of a 64 color palette (interlaced)
- 1280x200, with 2 - 4 colors out of a 64 color palette
- 1280x400, with 2 - 4 colors out of a 64 color palette (interlaced)

In all, the Amiga 3000 uses 9 Custom Chips as coprocessors, including the ECS and these chips:

1> RAMSES Chip - 32 bit fast RAM support Custom Controller supporting static column mode DRAMs and allowing the CPU to perform DMA Burst-Mode access to RAM.

2> AMBER Chip - Video Display Enhancer chip, which provides deinterlaced displays for certain Enhanced Chip Set resolutions, provided that a multiscanning (or Multisync) Monitor is used....

(Note: The 1280x400 resolution cannot be deinterlaced with the Amber chip, and it cannot display the 1280x200 mode on a VGA Monitor by itself....)

3> DMA SCSI chip - SCSI Controller which Supports 32bit DMA (Direct Memory Access) Data Transfers through the SCSI Port.

Commodore makes two versions of the Amiga 3000:

- 1) The Amiga 3000/16, with a 16 MHZ 68030 and a 16 MHZ 68881 Floating Point Math Chip
- 2) The Amiga 3000/25, with a 25 MHZ 68030 and a 25 MHZ 68882 Floating Point Math Chip.

Interestingly enough, it seems that the Amiga 3000/25 uses a 16 MHZ memory subsystem, meaning that its speed performance will be injured by waitstates when it accesses memory. As such, the Amiga 3000/16 will be featured in this article, as it will not encounter a similar slowdown, and is only 10 - 20 percent slower at "real-world software applications" than the more expensive Amiga 3000/25....

Graphic Comparison of the features of the 68030 TT and Amiga 3000:

Atari TT/Amiga 3000 Features List:
(Comparison of each Systems' Features)

System Features	Atari TT030/2	Amiga 3000/16

and Components	Base System: \$3000.00	Base System: \$3300.00
Processing Features	16 MHZ Motorola 68030 chip 16 MHZ 68882 Math Chip	16 MHZ Motorola 68030 chip 16 MHZ Motorola 68881 chip
Megabytes of Standard RAM	2 Megabytes of 32-Bit RAM used as "Chip" RAM	1 Meg of 32-Bit DRAM 1 Meg of "Chip" RAM
Description of Operating Features	TT TOS. (AT&T Unix V.3.2 with X/Windows V11 & the X/Desktop GUI need 4 - 6 Megs of RAM)	AmigaDOS 2.0/WorkBench 2.0 (AT&T Unix V.4 scheduled for Sept.1990 - Jan. 1991)
Type of Bus Architecture	32-Bit VME Bus Architecture with Two Expansion Slots	32-Bit Zorro III Bus with 4 Expansion Slots
Graphic Display Resolutions and Capabilities	# of Displayable Colors 1280*960 in Monochrome 640*480 w/16 Colors 320*480 w/256 Colors The TT supports the ST's resolutions, and has a 12-Bit per Pixel (4096 Color) Palette	# of Displayable Colors 1280*200 w/2 Colors 640*400 w/4 Colors 320*200 w/4096 Colors (w/o interlace flicker) Most Amiga Graphics Modes in the Amiga ECS support a 12-Bit Per Pixel Palette
Standard Amount of Mass Storage	40 Megabyte Internal Hard Drive	40 Megabyte Internal Hard Drive
Built in I/O Ports	Atari ST Ports, and [1] SCSI [1] DMA [1] Appletalk Port	Amiga 2000 Ports, and [1] SCSI/DMA Port
Sound/Audio Capabilities	Uses Digital Sound Chip for 8 Stereo Sound Channels (Voices)	Uses Amiga Custom Chip for 4 Stereo Sound Channels
Networking Capabilities	Sun Network File System (NFS), TCP/IP, and AppleTalk Port	TCP/IP, NFS, Ethernet are available at extra cost

Based on both this graph, and last week's System Descriptions, presented below is a comparative analyses of both systems, which are classified according to the above topics:

Processing Speed:

Since both workstations use a 16 MHZ Motorola 68030 chip, and have a 68881 Floating Point Math chip, the only way to determine which computer is the "fastest" is to look at their architectures. Both the 68030 TT and the Amiga 3000 have a special segment of RAM which, while slower than standard System RAM, is accessible by both the systems' custom chips (as Video RAM for Graphics Coprocessors), and by their CPU as System RAM. This is called "Chip RAM" in the Amiga world. Both the A3000 and the TT support up to 2 Megs of Chip RAM. It is also notable that Chip RAM is significantly slower than Fast RAM (or memory accessible only by the CPU).

The Amiga also uses "Chip RAM" to store the currently displaying graphics of any application it runs in Windows. When it runs out of "Chip RAM memory" to allocate to Amiga apps, it can't open any more windows. Meaning that an Amiga then can't run any new programs without killing off

a program that is currently running. This isn't a problem with the 68030 TT (as TOS doesn't multitask and Atari Unix doesn't suffer this limitation), and the average Amiga User would probably not encounter this problem on a regular basis....

Another thing that the Amiga 3000 and 68030 TT have in common is a less-than-straightforward approach to supporting CPU Caches. While the Amiga 3000's CPU Slot has the pins necessary to support CPU caching, it is still limited in that CPU Caches can only assist the 68030's built in data cache, and must be very careful only to cache the Amiga's Fast RAM. On the Amiga, Chip RAM cannot be Cached since it is accessed and modified directly by the Enhanced Chip Set, at memory locations which aren't predictable enough to allow caching of actual data stored by the CPU in Chip RAM. But on the other hand, while this isn't an issue with the TT, Atari hasn't included any direct cache support for it....

The 68030 TT and Amiga 3000 both use a 32-bit Bus architecture. The Amiga 3000 uses its new Zorro III bus, and has included support for Burst-Mode DMA (Direct Memory Access) Transfers of 20 - 25 Megabits Per Second, with a theoretical limit of 33 Mbits/Second. This means that the Amiga 3000/16 will be able to access data from memory at a respectable rate. The 68030 TT uses the VME Bus Architecture, which is also capable of similar Data Transfer rates, so one does not surpass the other in this sense to a certain extent....

However, one main issue is Graphics modes. Some of the graphics capabilities supported by the Enhanced Chip Set tend to take up a great amount of CPU time. For example, if one tries to display 16 colors at a 640*400 resolution, one experiences a noticeable slowdown in system performance. However, Atari has made sure that the TT's graphics capabilities don't produce a significant decline in system performance. In other ECS Graphics Modes this is not an issue.

Here are Dhrystone Ratings for the 68030 TT and Amiga 3000, as performed by Atari and Commodore:

	A3000 (16 MHz)	A3000 (25 Mhz)	68030 TT
Normal	4300	6050	N/A
w/Registers	4400	6225	5700
68020	4770	6800	N/A
68020/Reg	4970	7000	N/A

Lattice C 5.0 was used for the Amiga 3000, while Turbo C 2.0 was used for the 68030 TT results..

Normal = Compiler set to 68000 Code Generation
 68020 = Set to generate 32-bit Code

Operating System Features:

 First Place - Amiga 3000. While both the 68030 TT and Amiga 3000 will run Unix, the Amiga 3000's native OS (read: AmigaDOS/Exec) provides several features (like multitasking and Arexx's Interprocess Communications tools) which aren't available in TT TOS. However, Atari Unix for the 68030 TT provides X/Desktop 2.0 (a GEM-like X/Windows Desktop and Graphical User Interface), while Commodore has announced no similar File Manager/Desktop for Amiga Unix. But this, in the short term, won't matter as much to many

A3000 or TT Users as AmigaDOS and TOS.

Atari TT030/2 Unix Notes:

The 68030 TT uses a version of AT&T Unix Version 5.3 (with support for Berkeley Unix). Called ATX (or Atari Unix), it also supports the TCP/IP and NFS networking standards. Atari has also gotten Ixi Ltd. to port X/Desktop, a GEM-like Graphical User Interface (GUI) running under X/Windows, to the TT. This means that the TT has the power of Unix, combined with a Unix GUI to make it easier to use. Furthermore, X/Desktop is also supported by several Unix vendors (including IBM and SCO), meaning that if Atari R&D works with Unix software companies, that the 68030 TT will have no lack of GUI-capable Unix software....

Amiga 3000 Unix Notes:

The Amiga 3000 uses a version of AT&T Unix Version 5.4, which supports both Berkeley Unix and SCO Xenix programs. It also comes with Sun's Open Look Graphical User Interface. Called Amiga Unix (or AMIX), it will be bundled with the Network File System, the TCP/IP federal network standard, and (reportedly) X/Windows 11.2. Commodore is also working to include Motorola's 68000 ABI (Applications Binary Interface), in AMIX. Such a feature would allow any ABI-compatible Unix program written for any 68000-based computer to run on the Amiga without modification or porting needed....

Expandability:

First Place - Atari 68030 TT. It uses the VME Expansion Bus, which is not only used in Sun Workstations, but has been a standard for years. As a result, there are literally hundreds of VME cards out on the market, serving almost any conceivable function. In comparison, the Amiga 3000's Expansion Bus Architecture doesn't have any 32-bit Expansion Cards available for it yet....

I/O Ports/Networking:

First Place - Atari 68030 TT. While the Amiga 3000 has some add-on products available for it providing ArcNet, DECNet, and Ethernet support, the TT030/2 has as standard all of the I/O ports (SCSI, RS-232, and AppleTalk ports) necessary to make it a desirable entry in the low-end workstation market. Atari is also developing an Ethernet card for the TT030/2, and the TT030/6 (the 6 Meg Tower version of the TT) will feature an Ethernet Port.

In terms of software support for computer networking, both Amiga Unix and ATX (Atari Unix for the 68030 TT) will support TCP/IP and the Network File System (NFS), which are Unix standards for accessing files and resources over a Network. However, while both the A3000 and 68030 TT will have solid networking software tools, the 68030 TT having a network port as standard gives it a greater advantage....

Market Outlook for the Amiga 3000 and 68030 TT

Amiga 3000 Outlook:

The Amiga 3000 has a great deal of potential, as the first low-end 68030-based workstation currently available. As it runs AmigaDOS, many Amigans are starting to buy it to replace their old systems. This trend will certainly continue, and the Amiga 3000 will quickly become prevalent in the Amiga community. With its 32-Bit Zorro III Bus Architecture supporting both 20-25 Mbit/Second Data Transfer rates and faster CPU accelerator boards, the Amiga 3000 provides much greater potential for expansion board makers than any other previous Amigas.

However, in order to gain strong momentum in the Computer Industry, Commodore has to sell to a wider audience. The Amiga has gained a reputation for being the first capable "multimedia", or "desktop video" computer, for the great mass of graphics/CAD rendering/animation products currently taking advantage of its graphics/sound abilities. With multimedia gaining more clout as an "industry buzzword", Commodore is trying to use the Amiga's reputation to give the A3000 a foothold in the business market. It will be interesting to see how this situation develops, as the Amiga 3000 provides solid processing capabilities, but has graphics capabilities that have already been overcome by both Mac II Color Boards, and the VGA/SuperVGA standard. It seems that Commodore's greatest struggle in the multimedia market is both getting "big name" software companies to write products for the Amiga 3000, and maintains the Amiga's current advantages in graphics/animation software, and other video products like Genlocks and video effects tools. Of course, with many developers now writing multimedia software for the IBM and Mac....

Also, while the Amiga's OS (no matter what one's opinions of it are) does provide a working multitasking system, it definitely doesn't have enough support to carry the A3000 in the business market. As Unix does have a growing base of industry support, a software base with products undreamed of by Amigans, and many capabilities which won't be supported by the Amiga's OS (like multiuser support), Commodore is also targeting the Amiga 3000 at this market, as a low-end Unix Workstation. With its good processing and data transfer speeds, the Amiga 3000 is definitely a viable option in this area. Many workstation vendors, including Sun, DEC, and IBM, are starting to focus on this area, however, so Commodore has a huge task ahead. And as the Amiga also has a reputation as a game machine, Commodore will have to increase its efforts in boosting the Amiga as a "multimedia engine" in order to succeed in the Unix market....

68030 TT Outlook:

Since the 68030 TT runs TOS, has many improvements over its predecessor (including VGA-style graphics), and has an industry-standard expansion bus, the TT seems a fitting upgrade to the Atari ST. Being in the \$2500 to \$5000.00 price range, the 68030 TT is obviously aimed at the middle to high end of the market, and is intended for the ST User who wants to upgrade to a more powerful system. Given all this, the 68030 TT seems destined to become the ST's successor.

But since it is in the same price range as the Mega ST's, is aimed at the same market, and uses an industry standard bus (while Atari shunned the Mega ST's expansion bus to the effect that there are VERY few boards out for it), the 68030 TT makes the Mega ST obsolete. And since Atari will probably not support any good policy allowing ST owners to trade-in their Megas and upgrade to the 68030 TT for a worthwhile (and profitable)

price, the TT may be a harbinger of tough luck for present Mega ST owners....

The TT030/2 is directly poised at the new 'Personal Workstation' market, which promises to grow into a billion-dollar industry in the next few years. It meets all the requirements for a workstation, as it has AT&T Unix, compatibility with standard LAN Networking Systems, and graphics which, though not spectacular, would be a desired asset for many low-end workstations.

Furthermore, large organizations (notably the U.S. Government) who have bought high-end microcomputers or workstations often need to interconnect them through LAN Networks, but cannot afford the cost to buy similarly powered computers for their entire staff. The 68030 TT could provide these businesses with an efficient "X/Windows Terminal" for use as an inexpensive Node in a LAN Network. And while this market may seem mundane or prosaic, it seems that this may be the largest untapped market in the workstation industry. But as I said before, several companies (Sun, IBM, and Apollo, for example) are beginning efforts to tap this market, so....

Given that low-end Unix workstations are only now beginning to target this niche, the TT030/2 has a unique opportunity to propel Atari into the middle/high end of the microcomputer market. The TT030/2 will be especially popular in Europe, where there is a massive need for good Unix workstations, and where Atari has enough clout to make the TT a standard in the business market.

However, the 68030 TT may not be so lucky in the US, where most people who need Unix would be more likely to consider a Sun or IBM Compatible. In order to get a foothold into this market, Atari will not only have to produce quality products, but gain a good reputation for supporting them in the Unix marketplace. While Atari has always made good products, the potential for ENORMOUS revenue that Atari could make off the 68030 TT will be seriously jeopardized if plans aren't established for Third-party Unix Software support, and a Sales and Technical Support Division capable of handling marketing and support efforts to large organizations. Notably, Sun has built its businesses on having Regional Sales and Support Teams, which can handle workstation sales and support on a personal basis with its Customers....

One way that Atari could quickly establish such a sales force is to build relationships with currently available options. For example, if Atari were to get Computerland or Businessland to sell TT030/2's, not only would Atari have a TREMENDOUS sales tool for their computer, but the technical support resources needed for Atari to endear itself to business would come with the package. Also, the publicity that would result from such a deal would be priceless advertising for the ST line. But the main reason for Atari being advised to do such a move is that Business-related Computer Centers like Computerland may be one of Atari's only options for obtaining decent sales and support for 68030 TTs among businesses and organizations such as universities....

Apple Makes Bid to Regain Educational Market, Delays System 7.0

Apple Computer has announced that it will be providing Educational Sales discounts of around 40 - 60 percent for its Macintosh Plus and SE line of computers. With this discount, schools and universities will be able, for example, to purchase a Mac Plus for \$700 - \$1100, a Mac SE for around \$1500, and a Mac SE/30 for \$2300 - \$2600....

Many industry analysts see this as both an attempt to displace the millions of aging Apple II computers now in the educational market, and to regain its share of the Educational Computer Market. Dataquest Inc., states that Apple now has a 42 percent share in this market, while it had a 58 percent share in 1988. Interestingly, many Apple II users have expressed great concern over the possibility of Apple "phasing out" their computer line. Also, Apple officials have commented that a low-cost version of the Mac (rumored to cost \$2500 - \$3000) will be introduced in 1991, and one official recently said that Apple II compatibility was a "major concern" for such a machine....

Apple has also announced that Version 7.0 of the Macintosh System Software won't be shipping until 1991. Apple first announced System 7.0 in May of 1989, and had last said that it would be available before September. While many Macintosh Developers have System 7.0 Development Kits, Apple has experienced problems both debugging several new features of System 7.0, and making it run comfortably with large applications on Macintoshes with 2 Megs of RAM....

But ponder, if you will, these questions:

- 1) Would widespread coverage among the computer industry media be a more effective means of "advertising" the 68030 TT?
- 2) Given that the current Motorola/Hitachi suit is on appeal now, what would happen if Apple only now was in the beginning stages of developing a 68040-based Macintosh?

> CPU STATUS REPORTâ €
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- Washington, DC

CEOs FORM COMPUTER INDUSTRY LOBBYING GROUP

Several computer company CEOs, including John Sculley (of Apple), Scott McNealy (of Sun Microsystems), and John Akers (of IBM), have started a lobbying group called the Computer Systems Policy Project, with John Young (Hewlett Packard's CEO) as its Chairman. CSPP will first turn its efforts towards identifying foreign markets which are closed to US Companies, and improving US Companies' access to foreign markets.

The CSPP will also work for strengthened "anti-dumping regulations", or laws prohibiting foreign companies to sell products at a cost which is unrealistically below their market or manufacturing cost. The latter concern was heightened by the collapse of the US DRAM Chip Industry, in

which Japanese chipmakers were able to gain dominance by "dumping" DRAM Chips onto the US market in order to gain market share. In this regard, the CSPP is working for the establishment of "realistic cost calculations" to determine fair pricing levels for products, and better ways to prevent companies to evade anti-dumping laws.

US Trade Representatives are currently involved with negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (or GATT), which is a 97-nation treaty which regulates trade issues (such as tariffs). A new GATT Treaty is expected to be completed before the end of 1990. The CSPP intends to work as an advisory group for the US in these negotiations.

- Armonk, NY

IBM INTRODUCES NEW LINE OF PS/2 HOME COMPUTERS

IBM has recently introduced the IBM PS/2 Model 25 286, a personal computer for the small business/educational market with a 12 MHZ 80286 chip, 1 Megabyte of RAM (expandable to 4 MB onboard), a 1.44 Meg Disk Drive, and VGA Graphics. Cost: \$2300.00 w/o hard drive, \$3000.00 with a 30 Meg Hard Drive.

This PS/2 is notably IBM's first low-end system to support VGA, and is being marketed as a price/performance alternative for small businesses, LAN Network nodes, and the educational market. Interestingly, IBM is expected to introduce several "multimedia peripherals" for this machine, including a CD-ROM Drive....

- Cupertino, CA

PETER NORTON COMPUTING PLANS MERGER WITH SYMANTEC

Symantec Corp. has recently reached an agreement to merge with Peter Norton Computing. In this merger (to be completed in August 1990), Peter Norton becomes a member of the Symantec Board of Directors, and will aid in product design and development for both the Norton Utilities, and Symantec line of products. Interestingly, it seems that Peter Norton decided to merge his company as an alternative to "taking it public" (or issuing out shares of stock for his company)....

- Little Rock, AK

SUPERCONDUCTOR PATENT BATTLE BEGINS NEW FRONT

The University of Arkansas has announced that it has recently won a fairly broad patent for thallium-based superconductors. Several researchers have found that this type of superconductor holds some of the greatest promise for developing higher-temperature superconductors. One of them, IBM, has obtained a patent for a relatively narrow application of this technology.

Interestingly, it seems that superconductor research has led up to a series of patent infringement lawsuits. Four groups, including IBM and DuPont, are currently fighting over patent rights for yttrium-based superconductors. The University of Arkansas' move is expected to trigger a similar incident between it and IBM....

> STUDENT DISCOUNTS STR OnLineâ € Students need Atari STs too!
=====

From: fnDDR@acad3.fai.alaska.edu
Newsgroups: comp.sys.atari.st
Subject: Re: Educational discount.
Message-ID: <1990May7.051335.19966@hayes.fai.alaska.edu>
Date: 7 May 90 05:13:35 GMT
Sender: usenet@hayes.fai.alaska.edu (news 'R' us)
Organization: University of Alaska Fairbanks
Lines: 64

In article <35003@shemp.CS.UCLA.EDU>, stephen@oahu.cs.ucla.edu (Steve Whitney) writes...

>> Yep... I believe that Atari would pick up more than a few sales by

It has been pointed out numerous times over the years in this group that Atari doesn't want to sell machines in the US, and they are doing an excellent job of it. However, if they ever change their minds, educational discounts would be a good start. I actually recall them advertising a small discount a few years ago as part of a back-to-school promotion.

>> 1) Making ST, Mega, TT available at university computer shops in
> the first place.

Very important.

The Atari store is across town from this campus. Many students don't own cars. Those that do have a hard time getting off campus during normal business hours due to classes and classwork. Why should they bother to drive a few miles to check out Atari when they can purchase Apple, IBM, Toshiba, Zenith, NeXT, etc on campus (with the cooperation of the local dealers, I might add)?

>> 2) Offering a student discount on said machines

I've asked the local Atari dealer several times why they haven't pushed for this. Their answer: "Atari's prices are already lower than anybody else, so why bother?" This is of course false. Also, I've noticed many students seem to believe that if brand X offers a discount and brand Y doesn't, then it must be cheaper to buy the brand X system. Faculty say

things like, "the brand X discount program shows that they are committed to higher education; brand Y obviously isn't, so avoid them." Brand Y is, of course, Atari.

>> 3) Placing ads in campus rags like Apple, Zenith, IBM, and NeXT do.

The Atari dealer does here, periodically. It seems to help somewhat in offsetting the damage done by lack of (1) and (2), in that there are some students and faculty who have STs.

I would also add:

- 4) Introduce an ST variant with built-in thinwire ethernet.
On this campus and many others, a machine won't even be considered for classroom/lab use if it can't be networked. And students want to buy the same machines used in the classes and labs so they can use familiar software with it.

>> It wouldn't be too tough to do, I imagine. Even step 2 could be
>> implemented by itself just to nullify the competition's power/price
>> advantage.

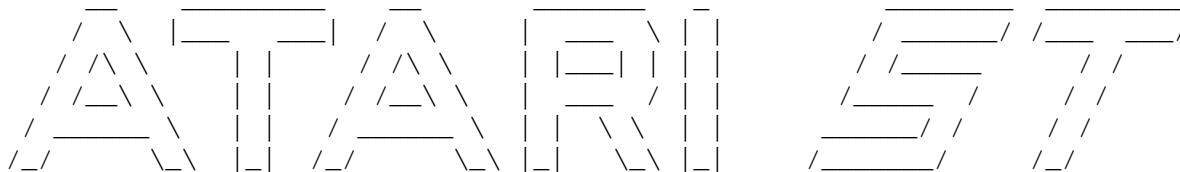
Sad but true. You can mail-order fast 286 and 386sx systems w/hard disk for the cost of the Megas, and the university discounted Apple and other big-name systems are comparable in price.

```
>> --
>> Steve Whitney  "It's never _really_ the last minute"      (( ))_ _(( ))
>> UCLA Comp. Sci. Grad. Student                             | ( * * ) |
>> Internet: stephen@cs.ucla.edu                               {  \_@_/  }
>> GENie:         S.WHITNEY                                   '-----'
```

I'm not even a student anymore, so I'm not arguing for a student discount because it wouldn't do me any good. I would just like to see Atari go for the university market, because it seems to me like one of the few options they have left to find a niche for themselves. Even though my STs are 4 years old, I'd hate to see them orphaned when the parent company dies. I certainly don't plan to buy more Atari equipment until I see some evidence of intelligent life in Sunnyvale, though.

Don Rice	Internet: fnddr@acad3.fai.alaska.edu
Geophysical Institute	E-mail: fnddr@alaska.bitnet
University of Alaska	Phone: (907) 474-7569
Fairbanks, AK 99775	Loran: 64.86N 212.16E

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PRODUCT AVAILABILITY UPDATE FOR DEALERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

TO: ALL ATARI DEALERS AND DISTRIBUTORS
FR: ATARI U.S.
DA: May 21, 1990

** ** *
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RE: PRODUCT AVAILABILITY

Attention all dealers and distributors of Atari products in the United States. Review your inventory at this time. The items below are NOW IN STOCK. It is highly recommended that you make your inquiries and place your orders as rapidly as possible. Make certain your back orders are covered and open customer orders are filled. Information contained herein is as of May 21, 1990 per Mr. William Crouch, V.P. Sales Atari. Place your orders through your local representative or call (408)745-2000 and ask for dealer sales.

520ST - NOW IN STOCK!
MEGA 4 - IN STOCK - READY TO SHIP!
SF354 - ASK ABOUT A SPECIAL PRICE ON SINGLE SIDED DRIVES!
SC1224 - Color Monitors IN STOCK - DON'T WAIT - BUY UP NOW
SM124 - AVAILABLE NOW!
SLM804 - NOW AVAILABLE!
MEGAFILE 30 - JUST ARRIVED - BUY IN QUANTITY AND SAVE
MEGAFILE 60 - JUST ARRIVED - NEW LOW PRICE FOR QUANTITY PURCHASES!
MEGAFILE 44 - REMOVABLE HARD DRIVES NOW IN STOCK!!!
LYNX SYSTEMS - NATIONAL ADVERTISING BREAKING THIS WEEK - BUY NOW!
GAUNTLET - ORDER NOW!!!
PORTFOLIO - NOW PACKED WITH FILEMANAGER/TUTORIAL CARDS - CALL FOR INFO!

** IMPORTANT ** IMPORTANT ** IMPORTANT ** IMPORTANT ** IMPORTANT **

ATARI'S WAREHOUSE WILL BE CLOSED AND WILL NOT BE SHIPPING NEXT WEEK FOR INVENTORY (06/28 THROUGH 06/31). IF YOU WISH TO BE ASSURED IN RECEIVING THE ITEMS YOU ORDERED ASAP.. PLEASE, PLACE YOUR ORDER IMMEDIATELY.

Additional updates will be posted when available. All quantities and price reductions limited to stock on hand. Please post this notice for all dealers.

*** END OF MESSAGE ***

Editor Note;

One can't help but wonder if this type message is the precursor to the news that the lines of communications in the actual dealer network are spotty... if in place any longer at all. Why would Atari place Dealer and Distributor info in the public fora?

> Stock Market ~ CPU NewsWireâ ¢ Watchin' the Sheckles Grow!
=====

THE TICKERTAPE
=====

by Michael Arthur

Concept by Glenn Gorman

The price of Atari Stock went up 1/8 of a point on Monday, and went down 1/4 of a point on Tuesday. On Wednesday, Atari Stock went down 1/8 of a point, and went down 1/8 of a point on Thursday. On Friday, it went up 1/4 of a point. Finishing up the week at 5 points, the price of Atari Stock is down 1/8 of a point since the last report.

Apple Stock was down 2 7/8 points from Friday, May 12, 1990.

Commodore Stock was down 1/4 of a point from 5/12/90.

IBM Stock was up 1 3/8 points from 5/12/90.

Stock Report for Week of 5/14/90 to 5/18/90

STock Reprt	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.	Last	Chg.
Atari	5 1/4	+ 1/8	5	- 1/4	4 7/8	-1/8	4 3/4	-1/8	5	+ 1/4
									63,600	Sls
CBM	7 1/2	- 1/4	7 3/8	- 1/8	7 5/8	+1/4	7 5/8	----	7 1/2	- 1/8
									143,000	Sls
Apple	41 3/4	- 7/8	41 3/4	----	41 1/2	-1/4	41 1/2	----	39 3/4	-1 3/4
									2,307,700	Sls
IBM	114 1/4	+1/4	115 5/8		115 3/8	-1/4	116 1/8	+3/4	115 3/8	-3/4
				+1 3/8					1,770,200	Sls

'Sls' refers to the # of stock shares that were traded that day.

'CBM' refers to Commodore Corporation.

'-----' means that the stock's price did not change for the day.

> LYNX POWER STR Tech Notesâ ¢ Battery power alternatives..
=====

LYNX BATTERY PACK
+++++

Special thanks to [Stace]'s friend for his suggestion!

"Lynx'rs everywhere!"

It may be a while before I have some sort of real product so I thought I'd release the information on how to build your own 6 D-Cell battery pack. These directions are extremely complex and shouldn't be attempted by people like myself (slight grin with a twist). I don't know very much about electronics so attempt at your own risk (it ran electrocop for 25hrs. and it didn't hurt anything that I can see.)

Take a trip to the nearest Radio Shack and pick up the following items: (3) "D" Battery Holders (CN. 270-386A) or something that holds 6 D' Cells. I bought 3 2's, because I thought they would work better in a belt pack than a single piece. Next, a coaxial power plug (3.5mm O.D.x 1.3mm I.D.(CN. 274-1571)) check twice I didn't and ended up going back the next day after chopping the end off my adaptor. Grab some 20-22 Gauge wire (Red and Black will help), a soldering pen, some acid core solder and don't forget the black electrical tape (covers that unsightly soldering job).

Now, with the hands of a surgeon line up the D-Cell containers so all the wires hang out one side. Start on one end and solder the Black wire on the First container to the Red wire on the Second, then solder the Black wire on the Second container to the Red wire on the Third container. Now, if all went well you should have a Red wire on the First container and a Black wire on the Third container. Next, wrap the solder joints with electrical tape then tape them to the side of D' Cell containers as you wrap them together in a block leaving the Red wire and Black wire hanging free.

Take and cut some Black and Red wire roughly the same length. The length of the wire will probably have some effect on the length of battery life but I couldn't say what that might be. I used about 4 feet of wire but cut any length you want, experiment. Cut one of the wires hanging from the battery box a little shorter than the other, this will help keep the electrical tape blobs from being on top of one another. Next, solder the

Red wire you cut, to the Red wire on the Battery Box. Do the same for the Black wires. Now tape those joints. For neatness I twisted the Red and Black wire together wrapping it ever 8" with a small piece of tape.

Last but not least, unscrew the cover off the Coaxial Plug (the plug you already tried in the Lynx before leaving the Radio Shack Parking lot!) and put it on the Red/Black wire before you do anything else! Make sure it's on the right way...check again, I know but it's gonna be on the wrong way (it's some kind of electrical law). Next, cut your wires the right length so you don't end up with six inch's of slack in one of the wires. Hook the Red wire to the center leg and the Black to the outer leg, make sure they don't touch. Solder them in place. I always put a small piece of tape around the center solder joint just for extra protection. Screw the cover on?

Now about 10 minutes should have passed. If you did everything right there should be some wire and tape left, good job! If you have trouble soldering make sure the tips clean and tight. Allow the wire and metal connections to heat to the point that the solder flows evenly and appears to suck into the wire. Don't let the solder gun sit on it longer then necessary. Good Luck and if you have any problems or just want to give me your results, send E-Mail to:

REALM

P.S. I'd like to thank those people that have been ordering cases and supporting my efforts. I listen to every comment and will continue to act on them. Thanks again!

> RON LUKS INTERVIEW STR Featureâ € CIS Atari SIG's head sysop....
=====

STReport's Online Today presents;

THE RON LUKS INTERVIEW
=====

by Oscar Steele

While I've been covering GENie for a few months now, it's only fair that we give a fair share of the limelight to the "other" network - as it's called by some GENie users. And the best way to do so is to get to know the man behind the Original Atari section on any major network, Ron Luks.

>>>> How long has the ST section been on CompuServe?

It opened almost at the same time as the ST was released, the 8 bit Atari forum started 8.5 years ago. We're about to celebrate our 9th anniversary during November of this year. The story behind how Atari coverage started began in early 1980 when I was only a regular CompuServe customer. I had just bought a new Atari 800 and I looked for a place where Atari people met. There was no such place; there was however, a Popular Electronics magazine sponsored forum. They allowed me to start a subsection about Atari on the forum. When it became the most popular section in the forum, CompuServe permitted me to start my own forum (they weren't called forums at the time, they were called SIGs) and I called it Sig*Atari. Many people ask me if the name came from Sig Hartmann of Atari, but that was when Warner Bros. owned Atari, so Sig Hartmann wasn't even around. To make a long story short, I founded the Atari forums and have been manager and lead sysop since the first day they opened.

>>>> Please, give a short autobiography about yourself and your relationship to CompuServe

I was living in Manhattan and was an active partner in a brokerage firm; I also had my own seat on the American Stock Exchange. While I was waiting for the IBM PC to come out, Atari released their now famous 800. I saw Star Raiders and was instantly hooked. I intended it to just be a game machine while I was waiting to buy a "real" computer. One of the items I purchased along with the 800 was a modem, which, at the time, I had no conception of its use and future influence. The package also included a CompuServe signup kit; and that's how I got originally involved with CompuServe!

I've been fortunate to have had a number of famous sysops involved in the Atari Sigs on Comp U Serve i.e., Russ Wetmore, author of Preppie; Michael Reichmann, who became President of Batteries Included; Steve Ahlstrom, who went on to initiate the Amiga forums on CIS. Most all were Atari software authors. Tom Hudson, an extraordinary software developer, was also a sysop and an online editor for Antic. Toward the end of 1982, after having sold my seat on the exchange, I left Wall Street and retired from the "super busy" schedule. It was at this time that I decided that the care & feeding of SIG*Atari was a full time job.

The forums started with the Atari 8 bit, and at the time the ST was released, we dedicated two separate forums. 8bit and ST. Shortly thereafter, the ST developer's forum opened, anyone who claimed to be a developer was, at that time, allowed in the forum. However, it subsequently was closed when support from Atari for developers dwindled to almost nothing. When it finally closed, it was absorbed into the productivity and vendor forums (where people like MichTron, ISD, and Codehead were given access for customer support). The ST forum grew into ST Arts and Games and the Productivity forum. And now, we boast of a new and very active Atari Portfolio forum.

Our Current SysOp Staff:
=====

8-bit forum: Don Lebow, Bob Puff,

General: Keith Joins, Bill Aycock

ST: Dan Rhea, Dave Groves, Mike Schoenbach

Charles Mc Guinness, David Ramsden, Ron Luks

Portfolio: John Knight

>>>> How many ST users access CompuServe?

CompuServe has close to 600,000 customers. They don't allow us to give out actual ST numbers, but I can say it's in excess of 20,000 users.

>>>> Has there been any effect on your ST Forums since GENie introduced its ST roundtable?

Absolutely, many people go there because the 1200 baud rates are less expensive. We'd like to think we're the best. In reality, 2400 baud rates are far closer to being comparable to everybody's rates than most realize. (things may change very drastically in the fall, but I'm not allowed to say anything more on that).

>>>> What is QUICKCIS and has it helped CompuServe?

QuickCIS is an excellent Terminal Program written by Jim Ness. It provides for very rapid online accessing of the system thus, it helps conserve time for the users by auto - capturing messages, downloading files, logging off, and allowing them to create reply messages and new messages off line. After which, the user logs back online, it then automatically and accurately posts the new messages in the proper areas. The program also allows users to scan data libraries for the newest entries. This fine programming effort has proven itself many times over in terms of allowing users to get the most for their online dollar; thus, encouraging people to use CompuServe more often.

>>>> What are your plans for the future?

We plan on maintaining the 8 bit forum as long as there is user interest. However, it is clear that Atari is dropping the line. We have no intention of pulling out of the market. We'll stay active with the 8 bit forum as long as possible.

Additionally, we plan on increasing the amount of Portfolio support significantly. The promising future coming out of the Portfolio division appears to be greater than the TT or STacy. The TT is already old technology and it's not even released yet. When Atari does finally release the TT, I think it'll be anything but a state of the art device. The Portfolio is where they stand to make their biggest success.

ST support will remain about the same level, but CIS plans to do two things. We plan to become far more competitive in the pricing arena and we are also introducing products that take advantage of the Desktop interface and the Atari. CIS has an HMI (Host Micro Interface), that allows you to use your computer desktop to select various CompuServe functions. An IBM version is already available, the Mac version is about to come out, and the Atari version is under development.

>>>> What do you think of ATARI'S current situation?

I think the company is failing and that they literally have wiped out the vast majority of their developers. For the first time since the Tramiels have taken over, the developers are finally getting the first dim glimmer of attention. However, there are some developers that will never come back. On top of which, the dealer network has been devastated; for all practical purposes there is no real dealer network left.

>>>> What if ATARI USA closed its doors and moved to Europe?

The only thing preventing it is that the majority of the stockholder's (Jack, his sons and grandchildren) live here in the States. But clearly most of the profits are coming from Europe. Atari isn't even listed in US mainstream computer magazines; the name Atari is rarely mentioned in same caption with computers. It's generally considered a game company. Their games don't even dominate that market as they once did. And their installed userbase, including dealers, and developers haven't received adequate support in years. It is slowly changing for the better; however, it's highly questionable whether or not it's too little, too late. I personally think that it's very possible for Atari to profit and survive, but its definitely a uphill battle.

Thanks and kudos go to Ron for taking the time to grant this interview. I know he's a busy man (he must of have had a half dozen phone calls in/out of his office during the interview <Grin>). Hopefully, I'll be giving you an indepth look at CompuServe in the next few weeks.

P.S. Ron adds:

We are totally independent, with NO Atari censorship. We are proud that we are the largest independent source of support for all Atari computers.

> PITTSBURGH SPEAKS! STR SOUND OFFâ € A different viewpoint...
=====

STReport Reader Mail Call

Item 4394729 90/05/22 19:43
From: J.THAYNE J. Gregg Thayne
To: ST.REPORT Ralph F. Mariano

Sub: My Response to Donora PA

Dear Ralph:

I would like to comment on the letter that you received from Donora, Pa. in the last issue of ST Report. I feel that I have to comment since that he did not hear the ENTIRE conversation, and I want to set the record straight, so that Pittsburgh can move on to the real problems at hand.

From now on, I will refer to the letter writer as Mr. X. While it is true that I had a conversation with Rick from Gribnif Software, the way that Mr. X paraphrased it left out a lot of the IMPORTANT things. Here is what REALLY HAPPENED...

While at the North-East AtariFest I wanted to get my copy of NeoDesk upgraded to a more current version, since I can't use it with all the programs that I use. I went to the Gribnif table and talked to the gentleman there, which happened to be Rick of Gribnif Software. I asked him how much it would be to upgrade from version 1.x of NeoDesk to the current version that they were selling and promoting at the show. He told me that it would be \$20.00. I ran back over to the PACE booth, where I was 90% of the show, and got my original disk, then went back to Rick.

I said, "Here is my original disk, but I have the Docs at home, if you need, I can bring them in tomorrow if you need them, now what do I have to do?" He then informed me to fill out this card that he handed me, and that they would send me my new version in 2-8 weeks. I asked him why he could not just upgrade to the current version that they had there. He told me "We don't do it THAT way." I then explained that my friend had that done at a previous show within the last year, and he repeated the above, but in a way that I did not like. His tone was starting to get uppity.

Since I really wanted the program at that time, and that I use the program often, I asked him if the \$35 price was what they were charging to buy it new, and he answered "Yes". I then brought up the fact that there were several vendors there that had the product NEW and the new VERSION for a lower price. He then told me in a very harsh tone, "You can't find the program at a lower price." I then gave him figures from two of the vendors at the show, and said that I could go over there and buy it new for at least \$5.00 cheaper than they were selling it new, and I would have it NOW. Not to mention the fact that I could do what a lot of the show attendees did, and tell the other vendor with the higher price that the other vendor had it at a lower price, and they would then match or beat the price, so I expressed that I could probably get NeoDesk for around \$25.00. That would only be \$5.00 more than the upgrade, and I wouldn't have to wait WEEKS to get the new version. After expressing my dislike for his policies, I then DID say, "I will just get the program (NeoDesk) at a lower price elsewhere."

Now the last quote was what I said, and if heard without the previous conversation, it could be taken wrong, but if Mr. X was there for the ENTIRE conversation, then he would not have been misled. One final note about my experience with Gribnif is that while I was walking away from the booth, after saying that I would get the program at a lower price, I overheard Rick say a few nasty things about "that guy...", and I was not pleased.

On to better things. I can understand the problems that the show had, and even some of the good things that happened, but the REAL problem is that we as Atari Users must UNITE and stop the petty wars, and get to the heart of the problem, and that being Atari. How can we as users try

to gain new members when there is a shortage of Atari product in the U.S.A.? I have talked to the latest Atari Dealer that we HAD, and his reason for not supporting the Atari line of products anymore was "Problems with Atari." It was not competition from local or mail-order places, but it was the problems of Atari itself.

I feel that until the users can stop their bickering, and focus their attention on the real problems, we will never get anywhere, and we may end up as orphaned computer users. We must let Atari know that we want SUPPORT, product and advertising. I can't remember the last time that I saw an ad in a MAJOR magazine for a ATARI computer. We need to let people know that Atari is more than just the game machine that they still think of. Atari has to get off their duffs and get on the ball. Atari does well out of the U.S. but has problems here, I don't want to hear about the FCC and how strict they are, IBM and other companies don't have these problems when they sell their products both over seas and in the U.S.

These opinions are my own, and in no way represent those of PACE, the Pittsburgh Atari Computer Enthusiast. And another note, I am the PACE Atari 8-Bit SysOp, and not ONE of the Vice Presidents. I was last term, but that was before the AtariFest.

Thanks you for your time;

J.G. Thayne
Greentree, PA
PACE 8-bit Sysop

> SALES & PR?? STR Spotlightâ € What a what a way to run 'em off!
=====

WHO... IS IN CHARGE?
=====

by Ed Baker

(Note: The following is strictly my own feelings and reflections on Atari and their narrow line of thought.)

First of all, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Ed Baker and I am the President of STar of Belleville, Illinois. A user group located about 30 miles East of St. Louis. We are one of four Metro St. Louis Atari user groups.

Hank Vize (President of EAUG out of Alton, Illinois) recently helped out an international touring dance group which was performing 'Sanctuary'. What makes this group interesting to the Atari community is the fact that they utilize the Atari ST to help create a 3-dimensional sound system for

the audio portion of the show. Hank wrote a review about the group which recently appeared in an issue of ST Report.

A number of local Atari users attended the performance and were overwhelmed by the audio portion of the performance. But this is about the performance and that's not what I'm here to talk about, so let me move on to what I swore would never happen again.... Atari's great wisdom and business practices amazing me.

Please, allow me to state that Atari loaned two Mega-4 systems to the dance company for use during the performances here in St. Louis. This was a good point on Atari's side but even that was marred by the fact that no one knew who the units were being sent to. The local Atari dealer had been asked by Bob Brodie to accept the units and have the dance group sign for them when they arrived. The dealer happily agreed to help out but the units ended up being sent directly to Michael Fioretti, from the dance group and in the mean time the dealer is still looking for the units to arrive.

Meanwhile, the systems ended up arriving after the company had to borrow other systems from a local user group to prepare for the show. Because the dance company had already set-up the audio system they didn't want to chance it by disassembling the present units for the ones sent by Atari.

After the performances were over Michael was given the opportunity to purchase the units from Atari at DEALER COST or send them back. He declined the offer, so the local Atari dealer stated to Michael that he would be interested in purchasing the units. Now remember, this is the dealer that was contacted by Atari for help in setting this all up.

The dealer took the units from the dance group and accepted the responsibility of caring for the units figuring there would be no problem from Atari. He made a phone call to Atari on Monday and asked to talk with the person in charge of dealer shipments. He was told that she was off that day and to call back Tuesday.

On Tuesday, Tammy (last name unknown) who is responsible for dealer shipments for Atari returned his call and after explaining that the dance company did not want to purchase the systems but that he did, the dealer was told that the only way he could purchase the systems was if Michael sent the full payment to Atari and then the dealer purchase the systems from Michael.

Does this sound rational? My question is, why couldn't the dealer just put the systems on his floor plan with Atari directly? Why did the dance company have to purchase the units first just to turn around and sell them to the dealer? Well to say the least the dealer was a little put back and instead of going through this Mickey Mouse deal sent the units back to Atari costing the dealer money in postage and insurance.

Once again, the dealer comes out on the short end of the stick and the area loses the chance to purchase some computers. Tell me Atari, just what kind of people are you wasting money on to make all these wise decisions?

> FOLIO INFO STR OnLineâ ¢ "..one of the card's pins was altered...."
=====

ANOTHER GAME PLAY?
=====

S17/Community Square
24-May-90 11:28:10
Sb: #697-#FLICKER
Fm: ATARI Dev. Support 70007,1072
To: Barry Kominik 76004,3110

There is an interesting thing that happened to the RAM cards. In order to make them proprietary to Atari, one of the pins was altered in function. The effect of this is to charge the card battery off the Portfolio's battery. There were very few of these cards distributed by Atari, but Mitsubishi Plastics cards from other sources may be configured this way.

There is 1 Reply.

S17/Community Square
24-May-90 15:32:48
Sb: #712-FLICKER
Fm: SYSOP*Ron Luks 76703,254
To: ATARI Dev. Support 70007,1072

Is there any reason to physically alter or modify the card to make it proprietary to ATARI CORP other than to insure that ATARI would have a captive market for sales of extra RAM cards? Or does this modification significantly boost the charged life of a card?

Ron

> MIDI-TASKING STR OnLineâ ¢ Multi-tasking for the ST?
=====

C.BINCKLEY posts;

From Atari's "MIDI Magazine;"

A quarterly publication from the Atari Corporation, and this is the first issue.

Some relevant quotes:

- "In mid-1990, Atari plans to release the Atari MIDI-Tasking System"
- "Atari recruited Intelligent Music...to create [it]."
- "...allows...users to run up to six GEM applications simultaneously"
- "...information can be exchanged between applications, even in real time."
- "...any MIDI application can address any MIDI hardware device, assuming that a driver has been written for the device."
- "...the key difference between the Atari...system and systems such as SoftLink, MROS, MPE and [Hybrid Arts'] HybriSwitch is that the Atari system uses the ST's built-in GEM kernel to do the multi-tasking..."
- "The Atari...system's functions _can be used in conjunction with MPE, MROS, and SoftLink,_ however, because the system's MIDI-tasking capabilities are independent of its GEM capabilities."
- "Although the system can work with non-MIDI applications, Atari doesn't plan to promote the...system outside the music market."

And the final paragraph of the article reads:

"The Atari MIDI-tasking system functions with all Atari MEGA and ST computers. A minimum of one megabyte RAM is recommended. The MIDI-tasking will soon be available through Atari dealers for \$12.95 suggested retail."

Yes - _\$12.95_ gives us multitasking Ataris, at least for MIDI applications. Let's hope this is for real...

-- Chuck --

P.S.;

I hope Atari doesn't mind me reprinting from the magazine here. I have gotten the impression that VERY FEW people are aware of this program, and I, for one, would like to see Atari remain competitive in the music marketplace. This system sounds, at the very least, like a LEAP in the right direction (now, if we can get something like Hypercard/MIDI Manager happening on the Atari...).

> ATARI UP FRONT! STR OnLineâ € "Is it time to put up or.....?"
=====

ctsy GENie

This past week we observed the following post from an obviously enthusiastic Atari ST user, we felt it warranted being shared with our readers as it opened the door to a reply and we request reader replies be sent in to continue this subject..

Category 18, Topic 9
Message 104 Mon May 21, 1990
D.FRUCHEY at 20:41 PDT

The title of this topic seems inflammatory rather than honestly inquiring. Perhaps the author should change the statement to: "IT'S TIME TO ABANDON ATARI NOW!!!!"

Nevertheless, I'm going to try and rise to the bait and actually do a little DEFENDING of Atari Corp. (I can't actually believe I'm doing this as I know I'm going to get burned in responses but here goes anyway :^)).

The big question is this: Does the Atari line of computers meet your needs? Is the wordprocessor you use sufficient to produce the types of documents you create (I use WordPerfect and the answer is yes, it really doesn't matter that I don't have version 5.1, the current version meets my needs). Is there an existing database that fulfills your needs? Again, the answer is yes. With the exception of a Hypercard type program I can buy a database to fulfill any of my needs or contact a database company that will customize for my needs (such as High-Tech advisers). Is there a spreadsheet or financial package that meets your needs (since products like LDW power are Lotus compatible you can't point a finger in that direction)? Is there a desktop publishing program that fulfills your needs right now (the latest versions of Pagemaker, Express, and other products are now finally using options available in ST programs for over a year)?

The list goes on and on. A friend of mine recently was convinced to buy an IBM compatible because there were over 20,000 pieces of software available for the system. However, only about 4,000 pieces of software can be used by the average user. The rest require add on cards, higher resolution monitors, windows, a mouse, more RAM, etc. His IBM was ultimately no bargain and, guess what folks, the ST also boasts about 4,000 software titles. What did he gain? A higher price tag and a larger group of fellow users. But then the IBM world speaks so many different languages. Do you use UNIX, MS DOS, Windows, GEM, OS/2? Does your system run with an 8088,s 80286, 80386SX, 80386, 80486? It makes a difference in what you can and can't do. The PC world is fractured into such a diverse group of small user specific clicks that it is difficult to maintain any standards.

What about the MacIntosh world? I just finished reading the latest issue (May 1990) of MacWorld and the editorial is chock full of complaints about promises by Apple to complete their System 7 operating system by the end of this year. Apple will only promise a reduced version of the new system because it is INCOMPATIBLE with the existing software and the third party developers are screaming. The execs at Apple have fudged and promised a version 7.5 or possibly 8 that will come out with all the new additions they promised in the current software. When? Your guess is as good as mine. BTW... Has anyone looked at the price of a MAC II system? I can purchase a full ST system with 30 Mb hard disk, laser printer, and software for the price of their system. That's a heavy price to pay when I can do the same thing on an ST faster and easier (honestly I have tried).

Let's move to the dreaded Amiga... A recent article in Forbes Magazine criticized the Commodore corporation heavily for their inconsistent management practices and failure to integrate sound operating software with their system. In the last year or so Commodore had dropped their market share rating from 26 to 6 and sales have dropped substantially in foreign markets (but they have advertising!). The Amiga has become the true game machine of the home computer market but some critical

applications software is still missing or underdeveloped on this system.

Problems with hardware, software, support, and consistency exist on every single computer system. Does the Atari system you own meet your computing needs now or can you upgrade an Atari system via hardware or software to meet your needs? Can you contact someone in Atari or a third party company who can resolve your problems? Have you made the attempt to see problems resolved directly instead of sharing your woes with other users online?

I like the ST line of Atari computers and I'm hoping to someday own a TT (but my ST works great and I use it every day). Yes, I am disappointed by Atari's seeming lack of consistency, poor developer support, and the lack of purchaseable machines on the U.S. market. But I believe that Atari is hurting themselves and their profitability by failing to meet the wants of their user base in this market - not the user. I won a solid machine (oops I meant "own" not won) that is as fast as the competition, reliable, and affordable. I own or can buy software that will meet my every need and in 99.9% of the cases will also meet the needs of other users. As long as they give Atari an honest chance as a machine, not a corporation.

The pulpit is now empty, I'm back to my normal routine. See YA!

Dan "I Love My Atari" Fruchey

ON THE "FLIP" SIDE

Dan there probably isn't a soul who owns an ST that will disagree with you. You have come quite close to the mark. But missed a few possibly very important points...

Should the users feel comforted and reassured by your comparing the alleged misery of the users of other computer platforms to the conditions prevalent in the Atari arena? No, not hardly. No other platform is like Atari's is now; developers are bailing out, dealers are dropping like flies, oldtime users are dumping their gear while literally screaming they've have enough of Sunnyvale's lack-luster approach to the US market.

Please observe the situation most developers facing, for example; most will tell you they love the machine, "its the finest machine for the money." But Atari must increase the size of the installed userbase in the USA. It becomes very real and still remains very simple, they need to feed their families, pay the bills, etc...!

Folks are selling their ST machines hoping to get 'some' of the hard earned money they spent back. Many are purchasing into other thriving, ongoing and well supported US computer platforms. While most find it quite easy to criticize the "other" platforms, the truth remains; they (the users in those platforms) have NEW up to date hardware and software appearing on the market almost every day. Does the Atari market? Not with any regularity! Instead, we get excuses and double talk. There is good reason behind the unrest and increased appearance of "For Sale" posts... The ST computer users in the USA are getting tired of the "who cares about you" attitude Atari continues to unwittingly display toward the US market. Enough is enough... most users have had more than their fair share of unreasonable treatment and are now taking their dollars elsewhere, (the recent earnings statements posted prove that).

Are we to sit idly by while witnessing the 'obvious continued snubbing' of the US market while we comfort ourselves in the joys of listening to yesterday's applause? We live, work, and play in the USA, Atari has managed to mangle its image in this country to a point where its redemption is a MAJOR Public Relations nightmare. Yet we believe that the 'comeback' process is really not all that involved, it may require the 'putting away' of past animosities and giving cause to renew alliances and friendships between ALL Atari enthusiasts. Of course the release of new and existing product to the US marketplace in 'copious quantities' will certainly help a great deal.

While firmly believing I own five of the very best computers available for the money I have invested. I still have, unfortunately, left myself wide open for the rude awakening. Where or what will be with my investment six months further down the road.

Most of all, Atari seems to have forgotten;

- o - They're based in the USA
- o - They got their start with US investment dollars
- o - Their stock is sold on NY's Wall Street
- o - The customer is ALWAYS RIGHT!
- o - Good Customer Relations is fuel for future business
- o - Industry support (developers) is an absolute must

It seems they continue to "allow" the USA market be the last to receive or never see many products mentioned or shown in Europe. Its very easy for most of us to continue to use and enjoy the various arrays of ST equipment we now own, but its equally as difficult to understand why, year after year, the USA habitually gets the short end of the stick. Thus, leaving most of us with no avenue to improve our systems with while remaining loyal to Atari. Not to mention the obvious message being sent by Atari to prospective developers throughout the USA that they do not have a growing, prospering market in the Atari computer line at this time. And folks wonder why Borland has yet to release Turbo C in the USA? There are literally hundreds of superb programs available in Europe that will never see the light of day in the USA because the European distributors felt there is no profitability in exporting to the States. This they directly attribute to Atari's lack of activity in the USA's marketplace.

Perhaps, the 'powers that be' will take notice of the alarming numbers of "for sale" posts popping up all over the BBSs and Online services... And hopefully begin to realize how they (Atari), by their actions and decisions, are indirectly encouraging droves of loyal Atarians to migrate other computer platforms. Oh sure, there will be those who say they're selling their STs so they can get STes or TTs. That's Fairytales! Let's stop kidding ourselves, they're moving on to other computer platforms plain and simple. Why? "The machine ya love from a company so easy to" Three years I have been hearing that and for the same three years I have chuckled at it. Unfortunately, at this time, six months into 1990, with the STe on sale all over the globe but NOT YET in the USA, etc....come on Atari, stop making us who still continually preach the wonders of your machines, look like loyalist groupies instead of sensible, intelligent computer users. The Advantage package was promised at the last fall Comdex show (1989), how long does it take to put a promotion together? AND WE CONTINUE TO WAIT.....and WAIT.

Six months into 1990 and what has Atari done in the USA where WE, loyal Atari ST computer users one and all, LIVE?

ctsy CIS

20580 S8/Hot Topics
21-May-90 01:17:01
Sb: #20576-Atari dead?
Fm: Bob Retelle 71550,3312
To: ST Informer 70007,3615 (X)

Right now, recommending an Atari product to *anyone* is like recommending they buy a DeLorean automobile, knowing that the company is on shaky ground and that support and dealers for the car are drying up... and not telling them..

I don't feel I can recommend the combination of an ST and any of the IBM emulators over a "true" IBM to anyone who wants that kind of system.

IF they can find an Atari dealer to sell them the ST, and *IF* that ST happens to be one that will take the pc-ditto II board, and *IF* they can install it or get it installed, then maybe they'll have the equivalent of a crippled IBM clone.

IF they buy a true IBM clone, they'll get a machine that runs, right out of the box. They'll be able to upgrade it and expand it with no problems at all. It will run 100% of the applications they want, and it will grow with them as their needs grow.

True, they'll miss out on the "native ST mode" programs, but the way things are going, they won't miss out on much...

BobR

Hot Topics
21-May-90 01:46:55
Sb: #20576-Atari dead?
Fm: Dan Deckert 74156,1432
To: ST Informer 70007,3615 (X)

I've had a 1040ST since shortly after it came out. It gets used (primarily for games) every day. Before that, I used a series of Atari 8-bit computers to great effect. I even own a Portfolio. I've been a supporter of Atari computers for a long time. I also do work as a computer consultant. It's been over a year since the last time I honestly felt that I could recommend a Mega/ST to a new computer user.

I'm using a 25 MHz 386-based PC clone with SVGA, 4 MB of RAM, and 80 MB of hard disk space to create this message. My total investment in this system (including software) is still less than what I've spent on the ST over the years. There's nothing except Mac emulation that this machine can't do better than an ST. I still love my 1040, but it's a computing dead end.

Dan

I'll play devil's advocate... I need a FoxPRO clone on the ST; Versasoft's dBMAN is just adequate, and advanced functions and commands are buggy. I need LDW Power to update related, but currently un-opened spreadsheets (ala Excel). I need WordPerfect to run on the Moniterm. (Although getting anything to run on a PC on a big screen requires a hammer & crowbar :-)

The ST is still comparatively young, there are still a lot of rough 'un-professional' edges on a lot of the software. I like my ST, and I've got a lot of patience, (and a 25Mhz '386 :-), so I'm willing to bide my time while the ST grows up.

There is no better Desktop publishing solution than PageStream, (although Quark Express 3.0 is pretty close) LDW Power is 'snappier' on the Viking than Excel is on a Wyse 7190 under Windows. TouchUp is quicker (most functions) on my T-16'd ST than my '386 (except for a few functions that have been optimized in 80x86 assembler for the PC version that are still C in the ST)

Antonio Salerno is supposed to be working with some big-name software houses, let's hope he's successful! I believe that the ST/TT is a better platform, and it will find its niche someday (hopefully soon), Atari is trying harder than they ever have to make it a winner, I hope it's a good year.

ON THE OTHER HAND..

W.E. Rebock, a registered developer, makes some very interesting points here. Frankly, we find ourselves in well, "almost" in full agreement. There are however, a few questions and points to consider....

Does Bill actually expect most ST (power without the price) owners to run out and buy an IBM "25 MHz 386" while they wait for the ST to "GROW UP"? The important questions are whether or not most ATARI ST owners depend on their STs on a daily basis and can they afford the wait. Also, do they need their Atari computer systems kept technologically up to date.

To collectively lump all the software available to ST owners under a heading of "rough edged and unprofessional.." is grossly unfair to our loyal developers. No matter how the previous statement is read it is still incorrect. Regardless of what is said by all the challenges made, Atari is ultimately responsible for the condition of the ST marketplace in the USA, not the users, developers, or dealers.

STReport opinion about endorsements is like this; there is no way one should 'ever' say there is "no better than" about any program as it "hints" at partiality and certainly magnifies, that perhaps, the view taken was tunnelvision. Both of the major (Calamus and PageStream) Desktop Publishing packages available in the ST arena provide the ST users with the very finest of most all the other computer platform's best DTP features.

It's sad to see valiantly veiled attempts at trying to urge either Atari or the developer corp. to get excited all over again, about the ST arena. It would have been so much more productive if the writer had come

right to the point and said it like it is; "ATARI HAS GOT TO GET ON THE BALL AND FAST."

To mention A. Salerno's name in a passage relating to supposition and improbabilities is nice, but adds nothing to the credibility of the remarks being made. Whether or not Salerno is involved in any type of dealings is not relevant to the topic as there are no solid results to bring forward, only a different way of saying 'wait and you shall be rewarded'.

In the last few years we have been told this very same rhetoric ("Atari is trying harder than they ever have to make it a winner, I hope it's a good year.") by a number of ardently loyal individuals who meant well, but have since themselves given up and unfortunately, migrated to other computer platforms.

While not pointing to anyone in particular within the company, Atari has alluded to many wonderful and exciting "new things" in the past only to come up with a bevy of disappointing excuse(s). Or some type of sad story or, as in the recent past, the ominous 'silence' preceded by the "played down" repetitious delays.

Atari should look to the future and put the negative past out of their plans for the future, but then, who are 'we the users' trying to tell 'them' what to do? After all, they hold all the chips and call all the shots. Or so they think, they continually seem to forget one small item. We (the USA customers/buying public) hold the real money and Atari's future in our hot little purchasing hands.

> STReport CONFIDENTIALâ € Sayin' it like it is.....
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- Sunnyvale, CA ATARI TO TRADE COMPUTERS FOR SOVIET DRAM

Last week STReport brought you up to date on the international scene with the news that Atari was involved in landmark trade talks, this week we present the juicy details..

"The Atari Corporation is involved in talks to acquire computer chips from the Soviet Union," Gregory Pratt, Atari's chief financial officer, pointed out that "the company had obtained and tested dynamic random access memories, or DRAM's, produced in the Soviet Union." The chips can store 256k of information. Mr. Pratt said "Atari's main goal was to sell computers in the Soviet Union. But knowing that the Soviet Union has little currency to pay for our products, the company is actively looking for something to trade for." Atari Corp. is seeking to solidify a 'first ever' agreement with Russia to trade personal computers for DRAM. "This thing came out of nowhere and it's now moving very fast," said Pratt.

The proposal is for Atari to swap its computers for the 256K DRAMs, a basic component of many Atari products, from a Soviet-owned semiconductor plant in Zelenograd, a center for much of the country's high-tech research. As pointed out in the last few weeks, Global Development Corp., a international trade consulting firm has arranged for a series of meetings in Santa Clara next month between Soviet officials and U.S. high-tech companies, Atari among them. The Soviets are willing to provide all their excess production, as many as 2.5 million chips a month.

Workers at the Soviet plant would be allowed to keep 25 percent of any profit from selling Atari products, Mark Muchnick, president of Global said. "They're just dying to get their hands on computers," Muchnick added. "For the first time in their lives, these guys could get something more than a paycheck." Atari engineers have been testing the Soviet chips to see if they meet their requirements. "Basically, the chips work ok," however there has been a few problems, David Harris, VP of Atari's International Division, said.

Hopefully, Atari does a better job of keeping up with timely deliveries and their contractual agreements with the Russians. You see, these guys, unlike the US userbase, have many VERY BIG GUNS. ;-)

- Santa Clara, CA

BORLAND SHIPS C++ COMPILER

Borland International, Inc. announced the availability of Turbo C++ Professional, a new development environment that lets programmers add object-oriented programming to their skill set and more effectively tackle today's complex programming projects. Turbo C++ Professional offers complete support of AT&T's C++ 2.0 specification as well as full compatibility with ANSI C. Turbo C++ also includes the Programmer's Platform(TM), a new development environment, and Borland's VROOMM(TM) memory manager. "Turbo C++ opens the world of object-oriented technology to programmers while maintaining the performance and efficiency of C," said Philippe Kahn, Borland's chairman, president and CEO. "And VROOMM lets programmers break through the 640K memory barrier in their own programs."

To increase their productivity, many programmers are adopting object-oriented programming with C++. Borland's Turbo C++ Professional supports both ANSI C and AT&T C++ allowing programmers to move to C++ at their own pace.

Turbo C++ includes four comprehensive manuals and on-line hypertext help. The Getting Started manual includes installation guidelines, an overview of the Programmer's Platform and hands-on tutorials for learning C++ and C. The User's Guide contains in-depth information on use of Turbo C++. The Programmer's Guide offers technical information on Turbo C++ and programming for the IBM PC and Intel 80x86 architecture, plus a functional cross reference to the Library Reference manual. The latter documents all functions and global variables in Turbo C++ and provides examples for most RTL functions. Turbo C++ also includes TCTOUR, an on-line Computer-Based Training system, which familiarizes new users with the Programmer's Platform. Turbo C++ Professional comes with the above manuals and five additional manuals: Turbo Debugger User's Guide, Turbo Profiler User's Guide, Turbo Assembler User's Guide, Turbo Assembler Reference Guide and

Turbo Assembler Quick Reference.

Availability and Price

Turbo C++ is available for IBM PC/XT/AT and PS/2 computers and 100% compatible systems with 640K RAM (512K for command-line compiler), a hard disk and DOS 2.0 or later.

Turbo C++ has a suggested retail price of \$199.95;
Turbo C++ Professional is \$299.95.

Both products are available immediately through major resellers or direct from Borland. Borland will offer Turbo C 2.0 at a reduced price of \$99.95. Registered Turbo C customers can take advantage of a special promotional offer and buy Turbo C++ for \$79.95, or Turbo C++ Professional for \$149.95; registered owners of Turbo C Professional can buy Turbo C++ Professional for \$125. There will also be a 60-day introductory pricing offer of \$99.95 for Turbo C++ and \$179.95 for Turbo C++ Professional.

Turbo C++ DiskTutor is a book/disk package designed for C Programmers who want to learn Turbo C++. The \$39.95 package, which includes a streamlined compiler, will be released by Osborne/McGraw-Hill this summer. Additional Turbo C++ books and textbooks are scheduled for release this summer from major third-party publishers including Addison-Wesley, M&T Books, Osborne/McGraw-Hill, Que Corporation, Howard W. Sams, Sybex, Tab Books, John Wiley & Sons, and Wordware Publishing.

Borland International, Inc. (Scotts Valley, Calif.) is a leading developer of high-performance software products. Borland offers some of the world's most widely used business applications and programming software such as Paradox, Quattro Pro, SideKick, object-oriented Turbo Pascal, Turbo C, Turbo C++ and Turbo Debugger & Tools.

- Toronto, Canada

ATARI CANADA TO HOST TT's DEBUT

Atari Canada will be showing the TT during the first week in June, the 4th for the local usergroups and the 6-7-8 for the show proper, at the Palace Bonventure downtown, where they will host the "NORTH AMERICAN DEBUT OF THE TT". What a nifty title North American Debut sounds like, but does this mean that the TT will officially be available in Canada AND the USA? Or is this just another word game for "Let's release it in Canada and wait on the USA?"

- New York City, NY

PORTFOLIO OS AT RISK???

According to one of our inside track sources, reportedly, there is great unrest in the land of the Palmtops, something about a disagreement over operating systems..and/or the future of same, also something about a 512k version vs the current OS, along with a fully MS DOS compatible version and related support or better yet, non-support. This story is just breaking but we felt since the the tracking of such stories needs a beginning.... Seems as though a very recent deadline was allowed to come

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Upon connection type HHH (RETURN after that).
Wait for the U#= prompt.

Type: XTX99587,CPUREPT then, hit RETURN.

**** SIGN UP FEE WAIVED ****

The system will now prompt you for your information.

THE GENIE ATARI ST ROUNDTABLE - AN OVERVIEW

The Roundtable is an area of GENie specifically set aside for owners and users of Atari ST computers, although all are welcome to participate.

There are three main sections to the Roundtable: the Bulletin Board, the Software Library and the Real Time Conference area.

The Bulletin Board contains messages from Roundtable members on a variety of Topics, organized under several Categories. These messages are all Open and available for all to read (GENie Mail should be used for private messages).

If you have a question, comment, hot rumor or an answer to someone else's question, the Bulletin Board is the place to share it.

The Software Library is where we keep the Public Domain software files that are available to all Roundtable members. You can 'download' any of these files to your own computer system by using a Terminal Program which uses the 'XMODEM' file-transfer method. You can also share your favorite Public Domain programs and files with other Roundtable members by 'uploading' them to the Software Library. Uploading on GENie is FREE, so you are encouraged to participate and help your Roundtable grow.

The Real Time Conference is an area where two or more Roundtable members may get together and 'talk' in 'real-time'. You can participate in organized conferences with special guests, drop in on our weekly Open Conference, or simply join in on an impromptu chat session. Unlike posting messages or Mail for other members to read at some later time, everyone in the Conference area can see what you type immediately, and can respond to you right away, in an 'electronic conversation'.

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"CRYING TOWELS ARE FOR NINNIES...
...TRUTH IS WHAT REAL PEOPLE THRIVE UPON"

...Lonnie Tamale

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